



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Office of Marine Safety

Date: May 30, 2002

Accident: Fire on Board the *Port Imperial Manhattan* (DCA01MM008)

Statement by: Robert B. Ford,
Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

Subject: Coast Guard Deficiency Report regarding Fixed CO2 System

Statement

During the investigation into the fire on the *Port Imperial Manhattan*, I found that a Coast Guard Marine Inspection Deficiency Report (CG-835/Case number MI9903892) had been issued to the vessel regarding the piping for a fixed CO2 System. At the time, I suspected that the *Port Imperial Manhattan* at one time might have had a fixed CO2 suppression system. I contacted Coast Guard and company officials to determine when and why the system was removed. The following is not a verbatim record of the conversations. It has been developed from my handwritten notes of the conversations and is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and recollection. The phone conversations with the Coast Guard and company took place March 14 and 15, 2001. I did not formally document the conversations at the time because the answers from company and Coast Guard officials were consistent with Coast Guard practices and other documentation that supported the fact that the vessel never had a fixed suppression system.

On March 14, 2001, I conducted a telephone interview with Mr. Pete Johansen, Sr. Director of Marine Operations at NY Waterway. Mr. Johansen stated that the Coast Guard had found that the piping systems for the CO2 systems on other NY Waterway vessels were not in compliance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). In order to expedite the repair, the Coast Guard issued what Mr. Johansen referred to as a "blanket" 835 covering all company vessels. Mr. Johansen confirmed that the *Port Imperial Manhattan* did not have, and never did have, a fixed CO2 suppression system.

Following the conversation with Mr. Johansen, I contacted Cdr. John Cameron, Chief, Vessel Inspections Branch. Cdr. Cameron confirmed that the 835 should not have been issued to the *Port Imperial Manhattan* regarding the fixed suppression system. He also confirmed that the *Port Imperial Manhattan* never had a fixed CO2 suppression system.

Robert B. Ford